



## **Arlington Bicycle Advisory Committee Minutes**

Date: Aug 19th, 2020

Time: 7:15PM

Location: Via Zoom conference

Attendees: *Executive committee:* Christopher Tonkin (chair), Doug Greenfield, Jack Johnson, Adam MacNeill, Doug Mayo-Wells, Scott Smith  
*Town of Arlington:* Daniel Amstutz

David Creedon, Linda Epstein, Roderick Holland, Galen Mook, Alison Piasecki, Judith Proctor, Thomas Proctor, Steve Revilak, Matt Riley

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### 1. Introductions, Ground rules

Meeting opens with review of emergency remote public meeting guidance consistent with Governor Baker's executive order of March 12th, 2020: The Governor's order suspends the requirement of Open Meeting Law to have all meetings in a public and accessible location. Public meetings may meet entirely remotely as long as the public can access the meeting. Committee secretary Doug Mayo-Wells is taking minutes; the meeting is being recorded for the purposes of verifying the minutes; and the recording will be deleted after the minutes are approved.

Executive committee roll call:

Christopher Tonkin, chair, present

Jack Johnson, present

Adam MacNeill, present

Scott Smith, present

Doug Greenfield, present

From the Town of Arlington:

Daniel Amstutz, Sr Transportation Planner, present

Participants are invited to introduce themselves and affiliation, if any:

Roderick Holland, Precinct 7 Town Meeting member

Alison Piasecki, Charlie Proctor's partner

Matt Riley, COBWEB (Cops on Bicycles with Education for Bicyclists) officer  
Thomas Proctor, Charlie Proctor's brother  
Judith Proctor, Charlie Proctor's mother  
David Creedon, member at large  
Steve Revilak, East Arlington car-free resident  
Galen Mook, executive director, MassBike  
Linda Epstein, Arlington heights resident

## 2. Approval of the minutes from July 15, 2020

Amstuz: Some previous minutes are missing from website, November and December 2019; January and February 2020.

July draft minutes were sent to executive committee, but with insufficient time for review.

Tonkin moves to defer review of July minutes to September

Greenfield seconds the motion, Tonkin takes a roll call vote:

Tonkin: Yes

Johnson: Yes

Smith: Yes

Mayo-Wells: Yes

Greenfield: Yes

MacNeill: Yes

SO VOTED (6-0)

## 3. COBWEB OFFICER

Officer Riley

- 9 crashes in last 2 months since early June, some cyclists' fault, some vehicle operator's fault
- Continuing nightly patrols at Mass and Appleton, currently from 5:30-8pm but adjusting hours to match solar glare. Not aware when nightly patrols might end. Officers standing by have not observed any violations of left turn restrictions

Mook: Thanks Officer Riley and APD for their efforts to improve safety

## 4. TAC report

(Transportation Advisory Committee)

Smith

- Most items will be covered in update on Appleton Design Review Committee (DRC).
- Confirmed that Officer Ratteau was able to attend most recent meeting
- TAC submitted comments to Arlington Redevelopment Board (ARB) on the hotel proposed near Appleton St; traffic impact will be more than indicated in traffic impact

analysis; don't expect a massive increase in traffic but have identified sightline and parking issues

- TAC has not yet appointed a member to the DRC or received a formal request
- With Thompson School reopening there are concerns about signage and speeding near the school

Creedon: How big is the proposed hotel?

Amstutz: 4-5 stories, approximately 50 rooms, with restaurant

## 5. Update on Design Review Committee (DRC) for Mass Ave/Appleton

Tonkin: Wrote to Town Manager Chapdelaine (TM) to advise of his nomination by ABAC to serve on DRC

Amstutz: Nothing new to report

Smith: Leonard Diggins (Select Board, TAC) is concerned about the risk of spending a year on perfect design and not implementing quick remediation

Mook: Family members and partner of Charlie Proctor meet with the TM and discussed holding the first DRC meeting in August, as well as positioning of the memorial.

Smith: TAC will send a designate to the meeting when scheduled rather than waiting another month to vote on an appointment

Epstein: Interviewed TM in mid-July to be one of 1-2 citizen representatives on the committee, understand that 7-9 individuals have expressed interest; no follow up. Heard at TAC meeting that TM may have had some vacation time.

## 6. Ghost Bike memorial for Charlie Proctor – update

Mook:

- Met with TM 2 weeks ago, he had previously reviewed with Department of Public Works (DPW)
- Concept is to install pole at the "V" of Mass Ave and Appleton St. (by the Captain Joseph Grant memorial).
- DPW sees no conflict with sidewalk, snow removal, no ADA problems. DPW will install pole.
- Still need OK from Veterans' Services
- Notes that St. Athanasius the Great Greek Orthodox Church may actually own the land
- Installation ceremony could be in late September, or October depending on availability

Tonkin: Don't want to damage the memorial if curb cuts need to be revisited as part of remediation for the intersection.

Mook:

- Can revisit location as needed in future. Potential to transition ghost bike into permanent bench eventually if intersection is totally redone.
- Planning a small in-person ceremony, larger/publicized virtual ceremony

Holland: is this the first ghost bike installation since COVID?

Mook: Unfortunately no. One at Mass Ave/Harrison Ave in the Boston South End, small in-person and larger Zoom ceremony. Also one installed by family (not involving MassBike) on Topsfield Rd in Ipswich.

Tonkin: Terrible that this happened, can only hope it causes change to improve safety going forward

Thomas Proctor: Happy to have the problem of relocating the memorial if curb lines are changed in the future.

## 7. New shared lane markings by Town Hall

Smith:

- Brian Ristuccia in Facebook posted noted what appeared to be lane markings in the "door zone" by Town Hall.
- Reviewed Arlington Standards, MUTCD (Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices) guidance and measured.
- Background:
  - Typical parking lane approx. 8 feet wide. Car parked 1 foot from curb typically extends to approx. 7 feet (or more for larger vehicles). National standard calls for shared lane marking to be at least 11 feet from curb when parking is present (i.e., barely out of the "door zone").
  - Approx. 4 years ago was part of a group working on parking standards for Arlington, guidance issued is to follow 11 feet minimum standard if road speed is high, or in the middle of the lane on a low-speed road. (Could argue either for Mass Ave, but likely low speed since Town speed limit has been lowered.)
  - East of Rt 60 opted for "center of lane" marking.
- DPW (Department of Public Works) painted over old (marginal) markings, right next to parking lane line. Westbound exactly 11 feet from curb, on the eastbound side by Town Hall 10 1/2 feet (does not meet any standard; is in the "door zone").
- Was going to write to DPW as an individual, but instead suggest communication come formally from ABAC to repaint minimally the eastbound side.

Amstutz: Not aware of sharrows in that location or plans to repaint

Smith: Were very faded

Tonkin: Agrees with Smith, should ask for correction of eastbound side at least

Smith: Has drafted letter. In addition to points already covered, letter points out that repainting will be more consistent with lane markings east of Town Hall as part of the Arlington Center Safe Travel project, that moving the lane markings out of the tire path will improve their longevity, and that moving the lane markings also communicates more clearly that these lanes are not wide enough for side-by-side lane sharing, and encourages cyclists eastbound to stay far enough to the left that they can see and be seen by traffic pulling out of Peg Spengler Way (by Robbins Library).

Holland: Suggests adding "to prevent foreseeable accidents"

Tonkin will send as chair, and copy committee.

Tonkin moves to send Smith's letter to Wayne Chouinard (Town engineer) and Michael Rademacher (director of DPW)

Mayo-Wells seconds the motion, Tonkin takes a roll call vote:

Tonkin: Yes

Smith: Yes

MacNeill: Yes

Johnson: Yes

Greenfield: Yes

Mayo-Wells: Yes

SO VOTED (6-0)

## 8. Bluebikes station locations in Arlington and bike share program

Amstutz:

- Materials posted to Select Board agenda for Monday, August 17, 2020
- <https://www.arlingtonma.gov/Home/ShowDocument?id=52643>
- Select Board approved first 4 locations, remaining two need more discussion.
- Residents were polled on 3 scenarios
- Locations represent tradeoffs between desired coverage locations and feasibility (minimize parking space removal, etc.)
- Can't install a station in the Heights as part of first group because of [Motive's] density requirements for network

Creedon: How do bikes pull out, on the street side or sidewalk side? Is there any hazard?

Amstutz: Can do either. Street is preferable if there is a buffer, e.g., bike lane, between traffic. Stations on sidewalk may be nudged toward traffic over time by action of inserting bikes into docks.

Mook: How many bikes/station?

Amstutz: 11 docks, 6/7 bikes per station (38 total). Bike-to-dock ratio is tuned so there should always be a dock free.

Amstutz: Continuing with the 2 stations not approved by Select Board

- Thorndike field is obvious location, but on MBTA property and requires their approval (Town property near Magnolia field is a possible fallback, but would be less convenient to bikeway)
- Linwood St, concerns about how much street is narrowed – may move to sidewalk
- Off-street stations remain through winter, on-street stations will be removed during winter (to allow plowing).

Smith: Grafton St location is at far west end of Capitol Square, nothing closer to Lake St & Mass Ave?

Amstutz: Talked to Allison Carter (economic development coordinator) and business owners about locations, had looked at Winter St, but under-utilized parking spaces on Grafton were an easier sell.

Smith: At least there is a crosswalk right there, if you want to go eastbound on Mass. But if either of remaining 2 sites prove infeasible, might consider the east end of capitol square on Mass, to be closer to the North Cambridge station?

Holland: Grafton street spaces are under utilized now, but have been occupied by Capitol theatre patrons and lawn service trucks

Smith: Is slope of Linwood a problem?

Amstutz: No. However, stations can be moved, for cost, if they don't work well. If we install additional stations, could go further east down Mass Ave, but also many requests for stations in the Heights.

Johnson: What is timing of installation, will Covid have an impact?

Amstutz: First 4 in by the end of August, blue bikes only needs a week, just need to coordinate with DPW and APD for blocking off space and traffic control. Next 2 slated to be approved by Select Board on August 31st.

## 9. Arlington Shared Streets Pilot

Amstutz:

- Reinstalled on Brooks Ave after Select Board approval on July 20th. Narrowed the scope a bit because of the Lake St/Bikeway construction. Some concerns about parking related to house construction; experimenting with traffic calming.
- Mary St pilot approved by Select Board, residents concerned about cut-through traffic, moving forward
- Applying for Mass Department of Transportation (MassDOT) "Shared Streets and Spaces" grant program to fund Mary St pilot, and possibly other initiatives. Need to apply before end of September.

Tonkin: Do these remain post COVID?

Amstutz: MassDOT funding can make them look more permanent, will have to talk out during winter, but could be deployed in spring, summer. Idea is to learn things now.

## 10. Connect Arlington, the Town's Sustainable Transportation Plan

Amstutz: Need to review draft factbook from consultant Nelson\Nygaard. Held online forum July 30th, got good feedback. Held additional focus groups. Transitioning into plan drafting stage. Strategy document is next component of plan, to release in a month or two.

## 11. Bike-friendly Community Re-certification

Amstutz: Deadline pushed further to October 1; League of American Bicyclists has redone parts of the application, and removed enforcement section from this round of applications. Have not reviewed all changes yet.

## 12. Arlington High School Rebuild

Smith: Not much to report on bikes. COVID impact on school may create opportunity to accelerate [bike related] construction.

## 13. "Free-range kids" on bikes, on and off the Minuteman

Holland: Observing for the past few weeks, kids without parents, doing typical "kid stuff" – popping wheelies, riding in groups, without helmets etc. Mixed demographics. Have also noted story in Globe about BMX Cruiser culture resurgence in Lynn. These are new players on the Minuteman and on Mass Ave, how to make them feel welcome, and help improve the safety situation. Nimble, alert, creative riding will be a problem for pedestrians. Maybe a "How to ride in Arlington" guide?

Officer Riley: Have not received any complaints, but mostly work nights.

Smith: Not malicious, but not following rules-of-road

Amstutz: Saw U-turns on Summer St.

Mayo-Wells: For this demographic is a "how to ride" guide from Boomers received as "how not to ride"?

Mook: Seeing youth-led wheelie kid culture, "bike life" nationwide. In cities, concerns with police, youth of color. Has been confrontational in Springfield, Worcester. No easy answer for getting 13 year-old boys to be safe. Positive in a lot of dimensions, Springfield motto is "wheels up, guns down," so an anti-gang push.

Creedon: Designated place for dangerous riding, equivalent to a skate park?

Mook: Working on this in Springfield, see it as the best way to avoid stringent enforcement and potential for violence. Same conversation as skateboards in the 80s. Boston has facility under Zakim bridge, well used, also now a small skate park in Allston. Pressure valve situation, how can we provide places for these kids to blow off steam?

Holland: Might sense to start dialog with the Human Rights Commission because of the demographic component. Arlington residents or not, want to avoid us/them dynamics. May reach out to Len Diggins, as he had previously expressed interest in cycling. He may be interested in attending ABAC as a Select Board member.

Tonkin: McClennan Park has a small skate park, banned bicycles from it, the ban was never overturned. Not clear on originale rationale.

Revilak: Len Diggins is very interested in transit and mobility and would likely enjoy an ABAC meeting.

#### 14. Update on automated counter

Amstutz: Spent 2 hours with MassDOT consultant and Eco-counter (vendor) trying to fix. Not fixed. Eco-Counter has sent new items, hoping to install next week.

#### 15. Social distancing on the Bikeway

Holland: Seems to be better

Tonkin: Anecdotally, mask compliance has improved

MacNeill: Seeing more masks than gaiters.

#### 16. Tour of Arlington a fall event?

Tonkin: Thinking of a 2 1/2 hr block with ABAC members at the locations to welcome riders and talk about sites. Volunteers for specific sites?



Mayo-Wells: Sculpture in the tree at Spypond

Tonkin: Could do Arlington Center, McLennan Park

Smith: By Alewife station to explain all the paths from there

Holland: Prince Hall cemetery

Revilak: Water tower on Park Avenue, good view

Amstutz: Robbins Farm park Boston view

MacNeill: Can to water tower from the far side of Spy Pond, well paved and clear.

Tonkin: Menotomy Rocks Park

Holland: Hill route could be an electric pedal assist alternative route

Tonkin: Send some more ideas

Mook: Would be happy to cross promote safety materials

## 17. Other business

Epstein: Attended TAC, had concern about trees proposed for front of hotel, solar glare, cyclists might be moving in/out of sun/shade, potentially more traffic for restaurant, etc. Not sure if it is ARB (Arlington Redevelopment Board) or TAC concern

Smith: ARB does address shadow and sightline issues. Trees by hotel should be less of an issue, since shadows will go toward hotel not street.

Epstein: Concerned about visibility of cyclists moving from shadow to light.

Tonkin: Advocates daytime running lights.

Epstein: Will send note to ARB and TAC.

Tonkin: On Bikeway, by new Food Link headquarters, rocks falling out of wall under sidewalk, concerned about stability, whose jurisdiction?

Amstutz: Should go to DPW. It's either town property or part of the bikeway right-of-way.

Smith: makes motion to adjourn

Tonkin seconds, thanks everyone for participation, and takes a roll call vote:

Johnson: Yes

Mayo-Wells: Yes

MacNeill: thanks everyone for participation, yes

Smith: Yes

Tonkin: Yes

(adjourned)